

DESCRIPTION

VIBRATION GYRO CIRCUITRY, VIBRATION GYRO UNIT, AND METHOD  
FOR DETECTING VIBRATION GYRO OUTPUT

5

Technical Field

[0001]

The present invention relates to vibration gyro circuitry, vibration gyro units, and methods for detecting 10 vibration gyro outputs, for detecting a signal corresponding to a Coriolis force generated when a rotational angular velocity is applied to a vibrator in a vibrating state so as to detect the applied rotational angular velocity. In particular, the present invention relates to vibration gyro 15 circuitry, a vibration gyro unit, and a method for detecting a vibration gyro output, in which a detection timing for a signal corresponding to a Coriolis force is optimally set in accordance with a characteristic of a vibration gyro.

20 Background Art

[0002]

Gyros are known as sensors for detecting rotational angular velocities. In particular, a type of gyro which uses a vibrator is referred to as a vibration gyro and 25 widely used for a variety of applications, such as detection

of unintentional hand shaking applied to video cameras or digital still cameras, direction detection in car navigation systems, and attitude control of movable bodies such as vehicles.

5 [0003]

Vibration gyros which have been put into practical use include a triangular-prism-shaped or quadrangular-prism-shaped vibrator to which a piezoelectric element is attached, and a column-shaped vibrator formed of a piezoelectric 10 ceramic on which electrodes are printed (see, for example, Japanese Unexamined Patent Application Publication No. 2000-337883).

[0004]

Fig. 13 shows an example of a configuration block 15 diagram illustrating a known vibration gyro. A vibration gyro 31, composed of a vibrator 32 and piezoelectric elements 33a and 33b which are attached to the vibrator 32, is connected to vibration gyro circuitry. The vibration gyro circuitry includes an adding circuit 1, an oscillation circuit 2, a differential amplifier circuit 4, a synchronous detection circuit 5, a phase shift circuit 13, and a direct current amplifier circuit 6. The vibration gyro 31, the adding circuit 1, and the oscillation circuit 2 constitute a self-oscillation circuit 7a for causing self-oscillation of 20 the vibration gyro 31 at a resonance frequency of bending 25

vibration of the vibration gyro 31.

[0005]

An output signal of the oscillation circuit 2 is input to the vibrator 32 and applied to the piezoelectric elements 5 33a and 33b through a conductive plate on the surface of the vibrator 32. An output signal of the piezoelectric element 33b and an output signal of the piezoelectric element 33a are input to the adding circuit 1 and added together. An output signal of the adding circuit 1 is input to the 10 oscillation circuit 2 and the phase shift circuit 13.

[0006]

The output signal of the piezoelectric element 33b and the output signal of the piezoelectric element 33a are also input to the differential amplifier circuit 4. The 15 differential amplifier circuit 4 outputs a signal corresponding to a difference between the output signal of the piezoelectric element 33b and the output signal of the piezoelectric element 33a. The synchronous detection circuit 5 detects the output signal of the differential 20 amplifier circuit 4 synchronously with a timing signal output from the phase shift circuit 13. The Direct current amplifier circuit 6 amplifies a direct current signal synchronously detected by the synchronous detection circuit 5.

25 [0007]

The vibration circuit 31 is driven by the self-oscillation circuit 7a and performs bending vibration in an orthogonal direction with respect to the lengthwise direction thereof. When no rotational angular velocity is applied around the lengthwise central axis of the vibration gyro 31, a strain in the piezoelectric element 33b and a strain in the piezoelectric element 33a are generated in exactly the same manner. Thus, the output signal from the piezoelectric element 33b and the output signal from the piezoelectric element 33a are the same in amplitude and phase, thus resulting in an output of zero from the differential amplifier circuit 4.

[0008]

When the vibration gyro 31 is applied with a rotational angular velocity around its lengthwise central axis while performing the bending vibration mentioned above, a Coriolis force is generated in a direction crossing at right angles to the lengthwise direction and the direction of the bending vibration. The generated Coriolis force causes a change in the bending vibration direction and a difference between outputs from two detection pieces (the piezoelectric element 33a and the piezoelectric element 33b). Thus, an output signal proportional to the output difference of the two detection pieces can be obtained from the differential amplifier circuit 4.

[0009]

When a rotational angular velocity is applied, the piezoelectric element 33b outputs a signal in which an output signal corresponding to a drive signal supplied to 5 the vibration gyro 31 and an output signal corresponding to the Coriolis force are superimposed. Likewise, when a rotational angular velocity is applied, the piezoelectric element 33a outputs a signal in which an output signal corresponding to the drive signal supplied to the vibration 10 gyro 31 and an output signal corresponding to the Coriolis force are superimposed.

[0010]

The output signals of the piezoelectric element 33b and the piezoelectric element 33a corresponding to the drive 15 signal are equal in phase and magnitude, and thus cancel each other in the differential amplifier circuit 4. On the contrary, the output signals of the piezoelectric element 33b and the piezoelectric element 33a corresponding to the Coriolis force are opposite in phase and equal in magnitude. 20 Thus, the output signal of the differential amplifier circuit 4 is proportional to the difference between the output signal of the piezoelectric element 33b and the output signal of the piezoelectric element 33a, and only a signal corresponding to the magnitude of the rotational 25 angular velocity is output from the differential amplifier

circuit 4. The drive signal for driving the vibration gyro 31 and the output signal of the adding circuit 1 are in-phase and proportional in amplitude.

[0011]

5 A Coriolis force develops in an orthogonal direction with respect to the direction of bending vibration corresponding to a drive signal. Therefore, a signal output from the differential amplifier circuit 4 corresponding to the Coriolis force, in principle, becomes zero at the 10 maximum amplitude point of an output signal of the adding circuit 1 which is correlated (in-phase) with the drive signal, and becomes a maximum at the zero crossing point of the output signal of the adding circuit 1. This indicates that the output signal of the differential amplifier circuit 15 4 and the output signal of the adding circuit 1 are phase-shifted by 90 degrees. Accordingly, the synchronous detection circuit 5 is to detect the output signal of the differential amplifier circuit 4 at a timing of an output signal of the phase shift circuit 13 which has a phase 20 difference of 90 degrees with respect to the output signal of the adding circuit 1.

Disclosure of Invention

[0012]

25 In known techniques, signal processing is performed in

accordance with a precondition that an output signal of the differential amplifier circuit 4 has a phase difference of 90 degrees with respect to an output signal of the adding circuit 1. However, the phase difference between the output signal of the adding circuit 1 and the output signal of the differential amplifier circuit 4 may not necessarily be 90 degrees, due to factors attributable to the structure, material, and size of the vibration gyro 31. Therefore, in a vibration gyro having such a characteristic that the phase difference is other than 90 degrees, if the output signal of the differential amplifier circuit 4 is detected synchronously with a timing signal of the phase shift circuit 13 which is phase-shifted by 90 degrees from the output signal of the adding circuit 1, a detection sensitivity for the output signal of the differential amplifier circuit 4, i.e., the sensitivity of detection of a rotational angular velocity, cannot be maximized. In addition, since a noise does not vary significantly with the structure, material and size of the vibration gyro, an S/N ratio in detecting the rotational angular velocity is decreased.

[0013]

The present invention has been made in view of the drawback described above. Accordingly, there is a need for vibration gyro circuitry, a vibration gyro unit, and a

method for detecting a vibration gyro output, which enables detection of a rotational angular velocity with high sensitivity.

[0014]

5 To this end, the present invention employs a configuration as described below. Specifically, vibration gyro circuitry according to the present invention includes a differential amplifier circuit for outputting a signal corresponding to a difference between output signals of two  
10 detection pieces of a vibration gyro, a synchronous detection circuit for performing synchronous detection on the output signal of the differential amplifier circuit, and a phase shift circuit for supplying to the synchronous detection circuit a signal, as a timing signal for the  
15 synchronous detection, which is phase-shifted with respect to a drive signal supplied to the vibration gyro. The phase difference between the drive signal and the timing signal is set on the basis of a phase difference characteristic of a detection sensitivity for the output signal of the  
20 differential amplifier circuit. The phase difference characteristic is obtained in advance under a condition where a rotational angular velocity is applied to the vibration gyro in a driving state.

[0015]

25 A vibration gyro unit according to the present

invention includes a vibration gyro having two detection pieces, a differential amplifier circuit for outputting a signal corresponding to a difference between output signals of the detection pieces, a synchronous detection circuit for 5 performing synchronous detection on the output signal of the differential amplifier circuit, and a phase shift circuit for supplying to the synchronous detection circuit a signal, as a timing signal for the synchronous detection, which is phase-shifted with respect to a drive signal supplied to the 10 vibration gyro. The phase difference between the drive signal and the timing signal is set on the basis of a phase difference characteristic of a detection sensitivity for the output signal of the differential amplifier circuit. The phase difference characteristic is obtained in advance under 15 a condition where a rotational angular velocity is applied to the vibration gyro in a driving state.

[0016]

The difference between the output signals of the two detection pieces of the vibration gyro is zero, under a 20 condition where no rotational angular velocity is applied to the vibration gyro. When a rotational angular velocity is applied to the vibration gyro, the difference between the output signals of the two detection pieces of the vibration gyro has a value corresponding to the applied rotational 25 angular velocity. Thus, the output of the differential

amplifier circuit is zero under the condition where no rotational angular velocity is applied to the vibration gyro, and when a rotational angular velocity is applied the output of the differential amplifier circuit has a value

5 corresponding to the applied rotational angular velocity.

The output signal of the differential amplifier circuit is an alternating current signal. The synchronous detection circuit synchronously detects the output signal of the differential amplifier circuit and rectifies the output

10 signal into a direct current. The phase shift circuit produces a timing signal for the synchronous detection. The output signal of the differential amplifier circuit is rectified in synchronization with the timing signal.

[0017]

15 The timing signal is phase-shifted with respect to the drive signal supplied to the vibration gyro. The amount of the phase shift (phase difference between the drive signal and the timing signal) is set on the basis of a phase difference characteristic of a detection sensitivity for the  
20 output signal of the differential amplifier circuit, which is obtained in advance under a condition where a rotational angular velocity is applied to the vibration gyro in a driving state. The detection sensitivity for the output signal of the differential amplifier circuit refers to the  
25 magnitude of the direct current signal obtained after the

rectification of the output signal of the differential amplifier circuit and corresponds to a detection sensitivity for the rotational angular velocity applied to the vibration gyro. More specifically, in the present invention, the 5 phase difference is variously changed, so that the relationship between each changed phase difference and the detection sensitivity for the rotational angular velocity is obtained in advance. On the basis of the obtained relationship, the phase difference that brings about high 10 sensitivity is set as a set value. The phase difference is not fixed to 90 degrees as in known techniques, but an optimum phase difference can be set to conform with the characteristics of the vibration gyro, enabling detection of a rotational angular velocity with high sensitivity.

15 [0018]

In addition, the phase shift circuit can be configured to include an integrating circuit for causing an input drive signal to be delayed by a phase difference determined by the time constants of a resistor and a capacitor. With this 20 configuration, a desired phase difference can readily be set by adjustment of the resistance of the resistor (including adjustment of the resistance by changing the number of stages of the resistor) or by adjustment of the capacitance of the capacitor (including adjustment of the capacitor by 25 changing the number of stages of the capacitor). This

configuration also facilitates circuit design, realizing a phase shift circuit that is provided with the function described above at a reduced cost.

[0019]

5        In a method for detecting a vibration gyro output according to the present invention, an output signal, which corresponds to a difference between output signals of two detection pieces of a vibration gyro, is detected synchronously with a timing signal which is phase-shifted  
10      with respect to a drive signal supplied to the vibration gyro, so that a rotational angular velocity applied to the vibration gyro is detected. The phase difference between the drive signal supplied to the vibration gyro and the timing signal which is phase-shifted with respect to the  
15      drive signal is set on the basis of a phase difference characteristic of the detection sensitivity for the signal corresponding to the difference between the output signals of the two detection pieces of the vibration gyro. The detection sensitivity is obtained in advance under the  
20      condition where a rotational angular velocity is applied to the vibration gyro in a driving state. The signal corresponding to the difference between the output signals of the two detection pieces is detected synchronously with the timing signal that is phase-shifted by the set phase  
25      difference with respect to the drive signal.

[0020]

The difference between the output signals of the two detection pieces of the vibration gyro is zero, under a condition where no rotational angular velocity is applied to 5 the vibration gyro. When a rotational angular velocity is applied to the vibration gyro, the difference between the outputs of the two detection pieces of the vibration gyro has a value corresponding to the applied rotational angular velocity. Thus, the signal corresponding to the difference 10 between the output signals of the detection pieces is zero, under the condition where no rotational angular velocity is applied, and when a rotational angular velocity is applied, the signal has a value corresponding to the applied rotational angular velocity. The signal corresponding to 15 the difference between the output signals of the detection pieces is an alternating current signal. This signal is detected in synchronization with the timing signal that is phase-shifted with respect to the drive signal supplied to the vibration gyro and rectified into a direct current.

20 [0021]

The amount of the phase shift (phase difference between the drive signal and the timing signal) is set on the basis of a phase difference characteristic of detection sensitivity for the signal corresponding to the output 25 signals of the detection pieces. The phase difference

characteristic is obtained in advance under a condition where a rotational angular velocity is applied to the vibration gyro in a driving state. The detection sensitivity for the signal corresponding to the difference 5 between the output signals of the detection pieces refers to the magnitude of the direct current signal obtained after the rectification of the signal corresponding to the difference between the output signals of the detection pieces. The detection sensitivity corresponds to a 10 detection sensitivity for the rotational angular velocity applied to the vibration gyro. More specifically, in the present invention, the phase difference is variously changed, so that the relationship between each changed phase difference and the detection sensitivity for the rotational 15 angular velocity is obtained in advance. On the basis of the obtained relationship, the phase difference that brings about a high sensitivity is set as a set value. The phase difference is not fixed to 90 degrees as in known techniques, but an optimum phase difference can be set to conform with a 20 characteristic of a vibration gyro, enabling detection of a rotational angular velocity with high sensitivity.

Brief Description of the Drawings

[0022]

25 Fig. 1 is a block diagram illustrating a configuration

of a vibration gyro unit according to a first embodiment of the present invention.

Fig. 2 is a perspective view of the vibration gyro shown in Fig. 1.

5 Fig. 3 is a sectional view of the vibration gyro.

Fig. 4 is a time chart diagram illustrating a voltage waveform in each portion in the vibration gyro circuitry illustrated in Fig. 1.

10 Fig. 5 is a graph illustrating an example of the relationship between a phase difference  $\theta$  between a drive signal and a timing signal for synchronous detection, and a detection sensitivity  $S$  for a rotational angular velocity.

Fig. 6 is a circuit diagram illustrating an example of a phase shift circuit illustrated in Fig. 1.

15 Fig. 7 is a block diagram illustrating a configuration of a vibration gyro unit according to a second embodiment of the present invention.

Fig. 8 is a perspective view of the vibration gyro shown in Fig. 7.

20 Fig. 9 is a sectional view of the vibration gyro.

Fig. 10 is a block diagram illustrating a configuration of a vibration gyro unit according to a third embodiment of the present invention.

25 Fig. 11 is a perspective view of the vibration gyro shown in Fig. 10.

Fig. 12 is a sectional view of the vibration gyro.

Fig. 13 is a block diagram illustrating an example of a configuration of a known vibration gyro.

5 Best Mode for Carrying Out the Invention

[0023]

In the following, exemplary embodiments to which the present invention is applied will be described in detail with reference to the accompanying drawings. However, the 10 present invention is not limited to the following embodiments, and various modifications can be made on the basis of the technical concept of the present invention.

[0024]

First Embodiment

15 Fig. 2 is a perspective view of a vibration gyro 31 according to a first embodiment of the present invention, and Fig. 3 is a sectional view of the vibration gyro 31. The vibration gyro 31 is composed of a quadrangular-prism-shaped vibrator 32 having a conductive material plated on a 20 surface thereof and two piezoelectric elements 33a and 33b which are attached to a first side face 32a of the vibrator 32. The piezoelectric elements 33a and 33b serve as driving pieces for supplying a drive signal to the vibration gyro 31 and also as detection pieces for detecting a signal 25 corresponding to a rotational angular velocity applied to

the vibration gyro 31.

[0025]

The vibrator 32 is formed of a material that can generate mechanical bending vibration, such as amorphous 5 carbon, elinvar, Fe-Ni alloy, quartz, glass, crystal, ceramics, etc. Each of the two piezoelectric elements 33a and 33b, formed in a shape of a quadrangular prism having a length identical to the length of the vibrator 32, extends along the lengthwise direction of the vibrator 32 and 10 opposes the other piezoelectric element forming a gap therebetween. The piezoelectric element 33a and the piezoelectric element 33b are symmetrical with respect to a center line bisecting the first side face 32a in a widthwise direction.

15 [0026]

The vibration gyro 31 is connected to vibration gyro circuitry. This circuitry and the vibration gyro 31 constitute a vibration gyro unit. As shown in Fig. 1, the vibration gyro circuitry includes an adding circuit 1, an 20 oscillation circuit 2, a differential amplifier circuit 4, a synchronous detection circuit 5, a phase shift circuit 3, and a direct current amplifier circuit 6. The vibration gyro 31, the adding circuit 1, and the oscillation circuit 2 constitute a self-oscillation circuit 7a for causing self- 25 oscillation of the vibration gyro 31 at a resonance

frequency of bending vibration of the vibration gyro 31.

The vibration gyro circuitry is formed on an IC (integrated circuit) using one semiconductor chip, for example. The semiconductor chip is implemented on a circuit board in a 5 form of a bare chip or a package. This circuit board is also mounted with the vibration gyro 31, constituting the vibration gyro unit.

[0027]

An output signal  $V_{go}$  of the oscillation circuit 2 is 10 input to a second side face 32b opposed to the first side face 32a of the vibrator 32 and is applied through the conductive plate on the surface of the vibrator 32 to the piezoelectric elements 33a and 33b attached on the first side face 32a. An output signal  $V_{gl}$  of the piezoelectric 15 element 33b and an output signal  $V_{gr}$  of the piezoelectric element 33a are input to the adding circuit 1 and added together. An output signal  $V_{sa}$  of the adding circuit 1 is adjusted in amplitude and phase by the oscillation circuit 2 and supplied to the vibration gyro 31 as a drive signal. 20 The output signal  $V_{sa}$  of the adding circuit 1 is also input to the phase shift circuit 3.

[0028]

The output signal  $V_{gl}$  of the piezoelectric element 33b and the output signal  $V_{gr}$  of the piezoelectric element 33a 25 are also input to the differential amplifier circuit 4. The

differential amplifier circuit 4 outputs a signal  $V_{da}$  corresponding to a difference between the  $V_{gl}$  and  $V_{gr}$ . The signal  $V_{da}$  is detected by the synchronous detection circuit 5 in synchronization with a timing signal  $V_{ck}$  output from 5 the phase shift circuit 3. The direct current amplifier circuit 6 amplifies a direct current signal  $V_{sd}$  synchronously detected by the synchronous detection circuit 5 and outputs a signal  $S$ .

[0029]

10 Fig. 4 is a time chart diagram showing waveforms of the individual signals described above. The left side of the figure illustrates each signal waveform when no rotational angular velocity is applied to the vibration gyro 31. The right side illustrates each signal waveform when a 15 rotational angular velocity is applied around a lengthwise central axis C (See Fig. 1) of the vibration gyro 31.

[0030]

The vibration gyro 31 is driven by the self-oscillation circuit 7a and performs bending vibration in an orthogonal 20 direction with respect to the first and second side faces 32a and 33b and to the lengthwise direction (y direction in Fig. 1). In a condition where no rotational angular velocity is applied around the lengthwise central axis C of the vibration gyro 31, a strain in the piezoelectric element 25 33b and a strain in the piezoelectric element 33a are

generated in exactly the same manner. Thus, the output signal  $V_{gl}$  from the piezoelectric element 33b and the output signal  $V_{gr}$  from the piezoelectric element 33a are the same in amplitude and phase, resulting in an output of zero from 5 the differential amplifier circuit 4.

[0031]

When the vibration gyro 31 is applied with a rotational angular velocity around its lengthwise central axis C while performing the bending vibration in the y direction, a 10 Coriolis force is generated in an x direction crossing at right angles to both of the lengthwise and y directions. This Coriolis force causes a change in the bending vibration direction and an output difference between the two detection pieces (piezoelectric elements) 33a and 33b.

15 [0032]

More specifically, the output signal  $V_{gl}$  from the piezoelectric element 33b and the output signal  $V_{gr}$  from the piezoelectric element 33a produce a difference ( $V_{gl} - V_{gr}$ ), and the output signal  $V_{da}$  which is proportional to the 20 difference ( $V_{gl} - V_{gr}$ ) can be obtained from the differential amplifier circuit 4.

[0033]

When a rotational angular velocity is applied, the piezoelectric element 33b outputs the signal  $V_{gl}$  on which an 25 output signal corresponding to the drive signal (shown as a

broken line in Fig. 4) supplied to the vibration gyro 31 and an output signal  $V_{cl}$  corresponding to the Coriolis force (shown as a dotted-chain line in Fig. 4) are superimposed.

Likewise, when a rotational angular velocity is applied, the 5 piezoelectric element 33a outputs the signal  $V_{gr}$  on which an output signal corresponding to the drive signal (shown as a broken line in Fig. 4) supplied to the vibration gyro 31 and an output signal  $V_{cr}$  corresponding to the Coriolis force (shown as a dotted-chain line in Fig. 4) are superimposed.

10 [0034]

The output signals of the piezoelectric element 33b and the piezoelectric element 33a corresponding to the drive signal are equal in phase and magnitude and thus cancel each other in the differential amplifier circuit 4. In contrast, 15 the output signal  $V_{cl}$  of the piezoelectric element 33b and the output signal  $V_{cr}$  of the piezoelectric element 33a which correspond to the Coriolis force are opposite in phase and equal in magnitude. Therefore, the output signal  $V_{da}$  of the differential amplifier circuit 4 is proportional to  $(V_{cl} - V_{cr})$ , and only a signal corresponding to the magnitude of 20 the rotational angular velocity is output from the differential amplifier circuit 4.

[0035]

The output signal  $V_{cl}$  of the piezoelectric element 33b 25 and the output signal  $V_{cr}$  of the piezoelectric element 33a

which correspond to the Coriolis force are opposite in phase and equal in magnitude, and thus cancel each other in the adding circuit 1. Therefore, the vibration gyro 31 is supplied with a constant drive signal regardless of a 5 generated Coriolis force. The drive signal and the output signal Vsa of the adding circuit 1 are in-phase and proportional in amplitude to each other.

[0036]

The signal Vda output from the differential amplifier 10 circuit 4 which corresponds to the Coriolis force, in principle, becomes zero at a maximum amplitude point of the drive signal for driving the vibration gyro 31, i.e. the maximum amplitude point of the output signal Vsa of the adding circuit 1 which is in-phase with the drive signal, 15 and becomes a maximum at a zero crossing point of the output signal Vsa. This indicates that the output signal Vsa of the adding circuit 1 and the output signal Vda of the differential amplifier circuit 4 have a phase difference of 90 degrees.

20 [0037]

However, the phase difference between the output signal Vsa of the adding circuit 1 and the output signal Vda of the differential amplifier circuit 4 may not necessarily be 90 degrees, due to factors attributable to the structure, 25 material, and size of the vibration gyro 31. In an example

shown in Fig. 4, a phase difference  $\theta_{ps}$  between the output signal  $V_{sa}$  of the adding circuit 1 and the output signal  $V_{da}$  of the differential amplifier circuit 4 is greater than 90 degrees.

5 [0038]

Accordingly, in this embodiment, the amount of a phase shift of the timing signal  $V_{ck}$  from the output signal  $V_{sa}$  of the adding circuit 1 is not fixed to 90 degrees, but is set in accordance with a phase difference which is actually generated between the  $V_{sa}$  and the  $V_{da}$ . Then, synchronous detection of the output signal  $V_{da}$  of the differential amplifier circuit 4 is carried out at a timing of the timing signal  $V_{ck}$  which is phase-shifted by the set phase difference  $\theta_{ps}$ . This indicates that the phase shift circuit 3 produces the timing signal  $V_{ck}$  in the shape of a square wave, which is phase-shifted by  $\theta_{ps}$  from the output signal  $V_{sa}$  of the adding circuit 1 and supplies to the synchronous detection circuit 5 the  $V_{ck}$  as the timing signal for synchronous detection.

10 [0039]

The synchronous detection circuit 5 performs full-wave rectification on the output signal  $V_{da}$  of the differential amplifier circuit 4 which is an alternating current signal, in synchronization with the timing signal  $V_{ck}$ , so as to convert the  $V_{da}$  into a signal  $V_{fr}$ . Then, the synchronous

detection circuit 5 integrates (or smoothes) the  $V_{fr}$  and outputs a direct current signal  $V_{sd}$ . Specifically, when the timing signal  $V_{ck}$  is at a low level, a negative voltage of the output signal  $V_{da}$  of the differential amplifier circuit 5 4 is inverted to a positive voltage so as to allow addition of the two signals. Additionally, because of the full-wave rectification, a higher detection sensitivity for the signal  $V_{da}$  and thus a higher value of the signal  $V_{sd}$  can be obtained, compared to half-wave rectification.

10 [0040]

The output signal  $V_{sd}$  of the synchronous detection circuit 5 has a polarity corresponding to the direction of the rotational angular velocity applied to the vibration gyro 31 and is proportional to the magnitude of the 15 rotational angular velocity. The direct current amplifier circuit 6 performs direct current amplification on the signal  $V_{sd}$  to a predetermined magnitude and outputs the signal  $S$ .

[0041]

20 Fig. 5 illustrates an example of a phase difference characteristic of the detection sensitivity for the output signal  $V_{da}$  of the differential amplifier circuit 4, i.e., the detection sensitivity for a rotational angular velocity applied to the vibration gyro. The ordinate axis represents 25 the magnitude of the output signal  $S$  of the direct current

amplifier circuit 6 or the magnitude of the output signal V<sub>sd</sub> of the synchronous detection circuit 5. The abscissa axis represents the amount of phase shift  $\theta$  of the timing signal V<sub>ck</sub> with respect to the output signal V<sub>sa</sub> of the 5 adding circuit 1.

[0042]

The characteristic shown in Fig. 5 illustrates the result of detection of rotational angular velocity using the vibration gyro 31 composed of the vibrator 32, formed of 10 amorphous carbon, having a length of 7.5 mm, a width of 0.58 mm, and a thickness of 0.6 mm and the piezoelectric elements 33a and 33b formed of PZT, as shown in Fig. 2. In this detection, a rotational angular velocity is applied around the lengthwise central axis C, while the vibration gyro 31 15 is driven and thus performing the bending vibration in the y direction. Then, under this driving condition and the condition of the direction and magnitude of the applied rotational angular velocity, the phase shift amount  $\theta$  of the timing signal V<sub>ck</sub> is variously changed and set for the 20 detection of the rotational angular velocity.

[0043]

As is apparent from Fig. 5, when the phase shift amount  $\theta$  of the timing signal V<sub>ck</sub> with respect to the output signal V<sub>sa</sub> of the adding circuit 1 ranges from 110 degrees to 150 25 degrees, high sensitivities (including a maximum

sensitivity) can be achieved and the high sensitivities are stably maintained. Therefore, for the vibration gyro 31 having the characteristic shown in Fig. 5, the set value  $\theta_{ps}$  of the phase shift amount of the timing signal  $V_{ck}$  with 5 respect to the  $V_{sa}$  is arranged within the range of 110 degrees to 150 degrees. This enables an increase in the detection sensitivity for the output signal  $V_{da}$  of the differential amplifier circuit 4 that is detected in synchronization with the timing signal  $V_{ck}$ , which 10 consequently increases the detection sensitivity for the rotational angular velocity applied to the vibration gyro 31.

[0044]

If the output signal  $V_{da}$  of the differential amplifier circuit 4 is synchronously detected with a timing signal 15 corresponding to the phase shift  $\theta_{ps}$  which is fixed to 90 degrees, a direct current value of the signal  $V_{da}$  obtained after the full-wave rectification and integration is lowered, compared with the case where the synchronous detection is performed with the timing illustrated in Fig. 4. 20 Consequently, as can be seen from the graph of Fig. 5, the value of the signal  $S$ , i.e., the detection sensitivity for a rotational angular velocity, is decreased. In this event, if a rotational angular velocity applied to a vibration gyro 25 is low, it may be likely that the applied rotational angular velocity is mixed with noise and thus cannot be recognized.

In addition, a Coriolis force is proportional to the mass of a vibration gyro. Therefore, since the output signal  $V_{da}$  of the differential amplifier circuit 4 is small, particularly in a miniaturized vibration gyro, detecting the signal  $V_{da}$  5 with a high sensitivity is important.

[0045]

The characteristic shown in Fig. 5 is just one example, and may therefore vary if the structure, material, size, or the like of a vibration gyro is changed. It is obvious that 10 for some vibration gyros, a maximum sensitivity can be achieved when a phase difference of the timing signal  $V_{ck}$  with respect to a drive signal is 90 degrees or thereabout, in conformity with the principle. Also in this case, the phase difference  $\theta_{ps}$  can be set to 90 degrees on the basis 15 of such a preobtained phase difference characteristic of the sensitivity  $S$  as shown in Fig. 5.

[0046]

In the example shown in Fig. 4, the phase difference  $\theta_{ps}$  of the timing signal  $V_{ck}$  with respect to the output signal 20  $V_{sa}$  of the adding circuit 1 is set so as to accord with the phase difference of the output signal  $V_{sd}$  of the differential amplifier circuit 4 with respect to the output signal  $V_{sa}$  of the adding circuit. However, these phase differences may not necessarily have to accord with each 25 other. As can be seen from the characteristic diagram shown

in Fig. 5, in the range of phase difference where the sensitivity level is kept constant at the maximum sensitivity, there is no or, if any, a negligible amount of difference in sensitivity attributable to a difference in 5 phase difference. Therefore, it is desirable to set the phase difference  $\theta_{ps}$  to be within this range of phase difference.

[0047]

Fig. 6 is a circuit diagram illustrating an example of 10 the phase shift circuit 3. This phase shift circuit 3 has an integrating circuit composed of a resistor 63 and a capacitor 64, which serves as a delay circuit for applying a phase delay to the output signal  $V_{sa}$  of the adding circuit 1 to be input. One end of the resistor 63 is connected to an 15 output side of the adding circuit 1, and the other end of the resistor 63 is connected to a positive input terminal of an operational amplifier 65. One end of the capacitor 64 is connected to the other end of the resistor 63 and the other end of the capacitor 64 is grounded. Two serially connected 20 resistors 61 and 62 are connected between the one end of the resistor 63 and an output terminal of the operational amplifier 65. A negative input terminal of the operational amplifier 65 is connected between the resistor 61 and the resistor 62. The output terminal of the operational 25 amplifier 65 is connected to an input terminal of a

comparator 66.

[0048]

The output signal  $V_{sa}$  passes through the integrating circuit composed of the resistor 63 and the capacitor 64 and 5 then is input to the positive input terminal of the operational amplifier 65. Since the electric potential of the negative input terminal of the operational amplifier 65 is the electric potential at the positive input terminal, a voltage across the resistor 61 is thus a difference between 10 the output of the integrating circuit and the output  $V_{sa}$  of the adding circuit 1. The current resulting from the voltage across the resistor 61 is supplied to the resistor 62, and the output voltage of the operational amplifier 65 is determined. This output of the operational amplifier 65 15 passes through the comparator 66, and thus the output signal (timing signal)  $V_{ck}$  of the phase shift circuit 3 shown in Fig. 4 is obtained.

[0049]

A resistance of the resistor 63 is herein represented 20 as  $R_{ps}$ , a capacitance of the capacitor 64 as  $C_{ps}$ , and a frequency of the output signal  $V_{sa}$  of the adding circuit 1 as  $f_0$ . A resistance of the resistor 61 is herein supposed to be equal to a resistance of the resistor 62. Under this condition, a phase difference between the input and output 25 of the phase shift circuit 3, i.e., the phase difference  $\theta_{ps}$

of the timing signal Vck with respect to the output signal of the adding circuit 1, is determined by the following formula (1):

$$\theta_{ps} = 2 \cdot \tan^{-1} (2 \cdot \pi \cdot R_{ps} \cdot C_{ps} \cdot f_0) \quad (1)$$

5

[0050]

This indicates that the phase delay amount  $\theta_{ps}$  is determined by the time constants ( $R_{ps} \cdot C_{ps}$ ). Thus, a desired phase difference  $\theta_{ps}$  can be readily set by adjusting 10 the resistance  $R_{ps}$  of the resistor 63 or the capacitance  $C_{ps}$  of the capacitor 64 (including adjustment of the number of stages of the resistor 63 and the capacitor 64).

[0051]

The phase shift circuit 3 is not limited to one which 15 uses a phase delay provided by a delay circuit (integrating circuit) and may be one which uses a phase lead provided by a phase lead circuit (differentiating circuit).

[0052]

In recent years, with the miniaturization and cost 20 reduction of apparatuses installed with a vibration gyro unit, there has been the need for miniaturization and cost reduction of such a vibration gyro. Vibration gyro circuitry is implemented on an integrated circuit using a semiconductor chip. In manufacturing such circuitry, 25 firstly, before the stage of implementation on the

integrated circuit, the relationship between a phase difference  $\theta$  and a sensitivity  $S$  as illustrated in Fig. 5 is obtained. On the basis of the obtained relationship, the resistance  $R_{ps}$  of the resistor 63 or the capacitance of the 5 capacitor 64 is adjusted, so that the set value  $\theta_{ps}$  of phase difference that can bring about a high sensitivity is determined. Then, the determined set value  $\theta_{ps}$  is used for implementing the integrated circuit. The output of the integrated circuit is monitored using an oscilloscope for 10 confirmation of proper setting.

[0053]

In this confirmation, if it is found that the desired sensitivity has not been obtained, the  $\theta_{ps}$  is reset. For example, the resistor 63 has a configuration in which a 15 multiple number of resistors are connected by a fuse. The  $\theta_{ps}$  is adjusted by adjusting the resistance  $R_{ps}$  of the resistor 63 by cutting a selected part of the fuse by applying a laser or a high voltage to the part.

[0054]

20 In determining the set value  $\theta_{ps}$ , such a characteristic diagram as shown in Fig. 5 is obtained for a plurality of vibration gyros, and then statistical data of these obtained characteristic diagrams is used for the determination. Alternatively, the set value  $\theta_{ps}$  may be determined using a 25 characteristic diagram of one vibration gyro. Then the set

value  $\theta_{ps}$  is applied in common among vibration gyros having an identical standard including the structure, size, material, manufacturing condition, etc.

[0055]

5 Second Embodiment

A second embodiment of the present invention will now be described. The same symbol is assigned to the same component as that in the first embodiment, and the detailed description thereof will be omitted.

10 [0056]

A perspective view of a vibration gyro 41 according to the second embodiment of the present invention is shown in Fig. 8, and a sectional view of the vibration gyro 41 is shown in Fig. 9. The vibration gyro 41 is composed of a 15 triangular-prism-shaped vibrator 42 having three piezoelectric elements 43a, 43b, and 43C each of which is attached to an individual side face of the vibrator 42. The piezoelectric elements 43c serves as a driving piece for supplying a drive signal to the vibration gyro 41. The 20 piezoelectric elements 43a and 43b serve as detection pieces for detecting a signal corresponding to a rotational angular velocity applied to the vibration gyro 41.

[0057]

The vibrator 42 is formed of a material that can 25 generate mechanical bending vibration, such as amorphous

carbon, elinvar, Fe-Ni alloy, quartz, glass, crystal, ceramics, etc. The three piezoelectric elements 43a to 43c, all having an identical shape (rectangular-prism shape) and size, are arranged symmetrically with respect to a 5 lengthwise central axis of the vibrator 42.

[0058]

The vibration gyro 41 is connected to vibration gyro circuitry shown in Fig. 7. This circuitry and the vibration gyro 41 constitute a vibration gyro unit. Similarly to the 10 first embodiment, the vibration gyro circuitry includes an adding circuit 1, an oscillation circuit 2, a differential amplifier circuit 4, a synchronous detection circuit 5, a phase shift circuit 3, and a Direct current amplifier circuit 6. The vibration gyro 41, the adding circuit 1, and 15 the oscillation circuit 2 constitute a self-oscillation circuit 7b for causing self-oscillation of the vibration gyro 41 at a resonance frequency of bending vibration of the vibration gyro 41.

[0059]

20 An output signal  $V_{go}$  of the oscillation circuit 2 is applied to the piezoelectric elements 43c which is the driving piece. An output signal  $V_{gl}$  of the piezoelectric element 43b and an output signal  $V_{gr}$  of the piezoelectric element 43a are input to the adding circuit 1 and added 25 together. An output signal  $V_{sa}$  of the adding circuit 1 is

input to the oscillation circuit 2 and the phase shift circuit 3.

[0060]

The output signal  $V_{gl}$  of the piezoelectric element 43b  
5 and the output signal  $V_{gr}$  of the piezoelectric element 43a  
are also input to the differential amplifier circuit 4. The  
differential amplifier circuit 4 outputs a signal  $V_{da}$   
corresponding to a difference between the  $V_{gl}$  and  $V_{gr}$ . The  
signal  $V_{da}$  is detected by the synchronous detection circuit  
10 5, in synchronization with a timing signal  $V_{ck}$  output from  
the phase shift circuit 3. The Direct current amplifier  
circuit 6 amplifies a direct current signal  $V_{sd}$   
synchronously detected by the synchronous detection circuit  
5 and outputs a signal  $S$ .

15 [0061]

The vibration gyro 41 is driven by the self-oscillation circuit 7b and performs bending vibration in an orthogonal direction with respect to a surface to which the piezoelectric element 43c is attached and to the lengthwise 20 direction (y direction in Fig. 7). In a condition where no rotational angular velocity is applied to a lengthwise central axis C of the vibration gyro 41, a strain in the piezoelectric element 43b and a strain in the piezoelectric element 43a are generated in exactly the same manner. Thus, 25 the output signal  $V_{gl}$  from the piezoelectric element 43b and

the output signal  $V_{gr}$  from the piezoelectric element 43a are the same in amplitude and phase, thus resulting in an output of zero from the differential amplifier circuit 4.

[0062]

5 When the vibration gyro 41 is applied with a rotational angular velocity around its lengthwise central axis C while performing the bending vibration in the y direction, a Coriolis force is generated in an x direction crossing at right angles to both of the lengthwise and y directions.  
10 This Coriolis force causes a change in the bending vibration direction and an output difference between the two detection pieces (piezoelectric elements) 43a and 43b.

[0063]

15 More specifically, the output signal  $V_{gl}$  from the piezoelectric element 43b and the output signal  $V_{gr}$  from the piezoelectric element 43a produce the difference  $(V_{gl} - V_{gr})$ , and the output signal  $V_{da}$  which is proportional to the difference  $(V_{gl} - V_{gr})$  can be obtained from the differential amplifier circuit 4.

20 [0064]

When a rotational angular velocity is applied, the piezoelectric element 43b outputs the signal  $V_{gl}$  on which an output signal corresponding to the drive signal supplied to the vibration gyro 41 and an output signal  $V_{cl}$  corresponding 25 to the Coriolis force are superimposed. Likewise, when a

rotational angular velocity is applied, the piezoelectric element 43a outputs the signal Vgr on which an output signal corresponding to the drive signal supplied to the vibration gyro 41 and an output signal Vcr corresponding to the 5 Coriolis force are superimposed.

[0065]

The output signals of the piezoelectric element 43b and the piezoelectric element 43a corresponding to the drive signal are equal in phase and magnitude and thus cancel each 10 other in the differential amplifier circuit 4. In contrast, the output signal Vcl of the piezoelectric element 43b and the output signal Vcr of the piezoelectric element 43a which correspond to the Coriolis force are opposite in phase and equal in magnitude. Thus, the output signal Vda of the 15 differential amplifier circuit 4 is proportional to (Vcl - Vcr), and only a signal corresponding to the magnitude of the rotational angular velocity is output from the differential amplifier circuit 4.

[0066]

20 Since the output signal Vcl of the piezoelectric element 43b and the output signal Vcr of the piezoelectric element 43a which correspond to the Coriolis force are opposite in phase and equal in magnitude, and thus cancel each other in the adding circuit 1. Therefore, the 25 vibration gyro 41 is supplied with a constant drive signal

regardless of a Coriolis force to be generated. The drive signal and the output signal  $V_{sa}$  of the adding circuit 1 are in-phase and proportional in amplitude to each other.

[0067]

5 In the second embodiment, similarly to the first embodiment, the amount of a phase shift of the timing signal  $V_{ck}$  from the output signal  $V_{sa}$  of the adding circuit 1 is set in accordance with a phase difference which is actually generated between the  $V_{sa}$  and the  $V_{da}$ . Then, synchronous  
10 detection of the output signal  $V_{da}$  of the differential amplifier circuit 4 is carried out at a timing of the timing signal  $V_{ck}$  which is phase-shifted by the set phase difference  $\theta_{ps}$  from the output signal  $V_{sa}$  of the adding circuit 1. This indicates that the phase shift circuit 3  
15 produces the timing signal  $V_{ck}$  in a shape of a square wave which is phase-shifted by  $\theta_{ps}$  from the output signal  $V_{sa}$  of the adding circuit 1 and supplies the  $V_{ck}$  to the synchronous detection circuit 5 as the timing signal for synchronous detection.

20 [0068]

The synchronous detection circuit 5 performs full-wave rectification on the output signal  $V_{da}$ , which is an alternating current signal, of the differential amplifier circuit 4, in synchronization with the timing signal  $V_{ck}$ , so  
25 as to convert the  $V_{da}$  into a signal  $V_{fr}$ . Then, the

5 synchronous detection circuit 5 integrates (or smoothes) the  
Vfr and outputs a direct current signal Vsd. This signal  
Vsd has a polarity corresponding to a direction of the  
rotational angular velocity applied to the vibration gyro 41  
5 and is proportional to the magnitude of the applied  
rotational angular velocity. The direct current amplifier  
circuit 6 amplifies the signal Vsd to a predetermined  
magnitude and outputs a signal S.

[0069]

10 Also in this embodiment, the relationship between a  
detection sensitivity for the output signal Vda of the  
differential amplifier circuit 4, i.e., the detection  
sensitivity for the rotational angular velocity applied to  
the vibration gyro 41, and an amount of the phase difference  
15  $\theta$  of the timing signal Vck with respect to the output signal  
Vsa of the adding circuit 1 is obtained in advance. On the  
basis of the obtained relationship, the phase difference  $\theta_{ps}$   
is set. Therefore, the output signal Vda of the  
differential amplifier circuit 4 is synchronously detected  
20 with the timing signal Vck whose phase shift amount is set  
to be  $\theta_{ps}$  with respect to the output signal Vsa of the  
adding circuit 1. This can increase the detection  
sensitivity for the output signal Vda, which consequently  
increases the detection sensitivity for the rotational  
25 angular velocity applied to the vibration gyro 41.

[0070]

Third Embodiment

A third embodiment of the present invention will now be described. The same symbol is assigned to the same 5 component as that in the first embodiment, and the detailed description thereof will be omitted.

[0071]

A perspective view of a vibration gyro 51 according to the third embodiment of the present invention is shown in 10 Fig. 11, and a sectional view of the vibration gyro 51 is shown in Fig. 12. The vibration gyro 51 is composed of a cylindrical shaped vibrator 52 and electrodes 53a to 53f formed on a peripheral surface of the vibrator 52. Each of the electrodes 53a, 53b, and 53c is adapted to be 15 independent, and the electrodes 53d to 53f are connected to a common ground. The electrode 53c serves as a driving piece for supplying a drive signal to the vibration gyro 51. The electrode 53a and 53b serve as detection pieces for detecting a rotational angular velocity applied to the 20 vibration gyro 51.

[0072]

The vibrator 52 is formed of a piezoelectric material such as piezoelectric ceramics. Every one of the electrodes 53a to 53f is placed parallel to the lengthwise direction of 25 the vibrator 52. The electrodes 53a to 53f are located at

six equally spaced positions around the circumference of a cross-section of the vibrator 52.

[0073]

The vibration gyro 51 is connected to vibration gyro circuitry as shown in Fig. 10. This circuitry and the vibration gyro 51 constitute a vibration gyro unit according to the third embodiment of the present invention. Similarly to the first embodiment, the vibration gyro circuitry includes an adding circuit 1, an oscillation circuit 2, a differential amplifier circuit 4, a synchronous detection circuit 5, a phase shift circuit 3, and a Direct current amplifier circuit 6. The vibration gyro 51, the adding circuit 1, and the oscillation circuit 2 constitute a self-oscillation circuit 7c for causing self-oscillation of the vibration gyro 51 at a resonance frequency of bending vibration of the vibration gyro 51.

[0074]

An output signal  $V_{go}$  of the oscillation circuit 2 is applied to the electrode 53c which is the driving piece. An output signal  $V_{gl}$  of the electrode 53a and an output signal  $V_{gr}$  of the electrode 53b are input to the adding circuit 1 and added together. An output signal  $V_{sa}$  of the adding circuit 1 is input to the oscillation circuit 2 and the phase shift circuit 3.

25 [0075]

The output signal  $V_{gl}$  of the electrode 53a and the output signal  $V_{gr}$  of the electrode 53b are also input to the differential amplifier circuit 4. The differential amplifier circuit 4 outputs a signal  $V_{da}$  corresponding to a difference between the  $V_{gl}$  and  $V_{gr}$ . The signal  $V_{da}$  is detected by the synchronous detection circuit 5, in synchronization with a timing signal  $V_{ck}$  output from the phase-shift circuit 3. The Direct current amplifier circuit 6 amplifies a direct current signal  $V_{sd}$  synchronously 10 detected by the synchronous detection circuit 5 and outputs a signal  $S$ .

[0076]

The vibration gyro 51 is driven by the self-oscillation circuit 7c and performs bending vibration in an orthogonal 15 direction with respect to a surface of the electrode 53 and to the lengthwise direction (y direction in Fig. 10). In a condition where no rotational angular velocity is applied to a lengthwise central axis C of the vibration gyro 51, a strain in the electrode 53a and a strain in the electrode 20 53b are generated in exactly the same manner. Thus, the output signal  $V_{gl}$  from the electrode 53a and the output signal  $V_{gr}$  from the electrode 53b are the same in amplitude and phase, thus resulting in an output of zero from the differential amplifier circuit 4.

25 [0077]

When the vibration gyro 51 is applied with a rotational angular velocity around its lengthwise central axis C while performing the bending vibration in the y direction, a Coriolis force is generated in an x direction crossing at 5 right angles to both of the lengthwise and y directions. This Coriolis force causes a change in the bending vibration direction and an output difference between the two detection pieces (the electrodes 53a and 53b).

[0078]

10 More specifically, the output signal Vgl from the electrode 53a and the output signal Vgr from the electrode 53b produce the difference (Vgl - Vgr), and the output signal Vda which is proportional to the difference (Vgl - Vgr) can be obtained from the differential amplifier circuit 15 4.

[0079]

When a rotational angular velocity is applied, the electrode 53a outputs the signal Vgl on which an output signal in accordance the drive signal supplied to the 20 vibration gyro 51 and an output signal Vcl corresponding to the Coriolis force are superimposed. Likewise, when a rotational angular velocity is applied, the electrode 53b outputs the signal Vgr on which an output signal corresponding to the drive signal supplied to the vibration 25 gyro 51 and an output signal Vcr corresponding to the

Coriolis force are superimposed.

[0080]

The output signals of the electrode 53a and the electrode 53b corresponding to the drive signal are equal in 5 phase and magnitude and thus cancel each other in the differential amplifier circuit 4. In contrast, the output signal Vcl of the electrode 53a and the output signal Vcr of the electrode 53b which correspond to the Coriolis force are opposite in phase and equal in magnitude. Thus, the output 10 signal Vda of the differential amplifier circuit 4 is proportional to  $(Vcl - Vcr)$ , and only a signal corresponding to the magnitude of the rotational angular velocity is output from the differential amplifier circuit 4.

[0081]

15 Since the output signal Vcl of the piezoelectric element 53a and the output signal Vcr of the piezoelectric element 53b which correspond to the Coriolis force are opposite in phase and equal in magnitude, and thus cancel each other in the adding circuit 1. Therefore, the 20 vibration gyro 51 is supplied with a constant drive signal regardless of a Coriolis force to be generated. The drive signal and the output signal Vsa of the adding circuit 1 are in-phase and proportional in amplitude to each other.

[0082]

25 In the third embodiment, similarly to the first

embodiment, the amount of a phase shift of the timing signal Vck from the output signal Vsa of the adding circuit 1 is set in accordance with a phase difference which is actually generated between the Vsa and the Vda. Then, synchronous 5 detection of the output signal Vda of the differential amplifier circuit 4 is carried out at a timing of the timing signal Vck which is phase-shifted by the set phase difference  $\theta_{ps}$  from the output signal Vsa of the adding circuit 1. This indicates that the phase shift circuit 3 10 produces the timing signal Vck in a shape of a square wave which is phase-shifted by  $\theta_{ps}$  from the output signal Vsa of the adding circuit 1 and supplies the Vck to the synchronous detection circuit 5 as the timing signal for synchronous detection.

15 [0083]

The synchronous detection circuit 5 performs full-wave rectification on the output signal Vda, which is an alternating current signal, of the differential amplifier circuit 4, in synchronization with the timing signal Vck, so 20 as to convert the Vda into a signal Vfr. Then, the synchronous detection circuit 5 integrates (or smoothes) the Vfr and outputs a direct current signal Vsd. This signal Vsd has a polarity corresponding to a direction of the rotational angular velocity applied to the vibration gyro 51 25 and is proportional to the magnitude of the applied

rotational angular velocity. The Direct current amplifier circuit 6 amplifies the signal  $V_{sd}$  to a predetermined magnitude and outputs a signal  $S$ .

[0084]

5 Also in this embodiment, the relationship between a detection sensitivity for the output signal  $V_{da}$  of the differential amplifier circuit 4, i.e., the detection sensitivity for the rotational angular velocity applied to the vibration gyro 51, and an amount of the phase difference 10  $\theta$  of the timing signal  $V_{ck}$  with respect to the output signal  $V_{sa}$  of the adding circuit 1 is obtained in advance. On the basis of the obtained relationship, the phase difference amount  $\theta_{ps}$  is set. Therefore, synchronous detection of the output signal  $V_{da}$  of the differential amplifier circuit 4 is 15 performed using the timing signal  $V_{ck}$  whose phase shift amount is set to be  $\theta_{ps}$  with respect to the output signal  $V_{sa}$  of the adding circuit 1. This can increase the detection sensitivity for the output signal  $V_{da}$ , which consequently increases the detection sensitivity for the 20 rotational angular velocity applied to the vibration gyro 51.

[0085]

In each of the embodiments described above, the phase difference  $\theta_{ps}$  is provided as a phase difference of the timing signal  $V_{ck}$  with respect to the output signal  $V_{sa}$  of 25 the adding circuit 1. However, since the output signal  $V_{go}$

of the oscillation circuit 2 and the output signal  $V_{sa}$  of  
the adding circuit 1 are in-phase and proportional in  
amplitude to each other, the phase difference  $\theta_{ps}$  may be a  
phase difference of the  $V_{ck}$  with respect to the output  
5 signal  $V_{go}$  of the oscillation circuit 2.

#### Industrial Applicability

[0086]

Vibration gyro circuitry according to the present  
10 invention, a phase difference of a timing signal for  
synchronous detection with respect to a driving signal is  
set on the basis of a phase difference characteristic of a  
detection sensitivity for an output signal of a differential  
amplifier circuit. This phase difference characteristic is  
15 obtained in advance under a condition where a rotational  
angular velocity is applied to a vibration gyro in a driving  
state. Accordingly, even if a phase difference that can  
bring about a high sensitivity varies with the type or  
structure of a vibration gyro, it is possible to set such a  
20 phase difference that can bring about the high sensitivity.  
This consequently enables detection of the rotational  
angular velocity with high sensitivity and increases the  
ratio to noise (S/N ratio).

[0087]

25 A vibration gyro unit according to the present

invention, a phase difference of a timing signal for synchronous detection with respect to a driving signal is set on the basis of a phase difference characteristic of a detection sensitivity for an output signal of a differential 5 amplifier circuit. This phase difference characteristic is obtained in advance under a condition where a rotational angular velocity is applied to a vibration gyro in a driving state. Therefore, even if a phase difference that can bring about high sensitivity varies with the type or structure of 10 a vibration gyro, it is possible to set such a phase difference that can bring about the high sensitivity. This consequently enables detection of the rotational angular velocity with a high sensitivity and increases the ratio to noise (S/N ratio). In addition, since, in general, the 15 sensitivity decreases as the size of a vibration gyro is reduced, the capability of detection of a rotational angular velocity with a high sensitivity is advantageous in developing miniaturization of vibration gyro.

[0088]

20 A method for detecting a vibration gyro output according to the present invention, a phase difference of a timing signal for synchronous detection with respect to a driving signal is set on the basis of a phase difference characteristic of a detection sensitivity for a signal 25 corresponding to a difference between outputs of two

detection pieces of a vibration gyro. This phase difference characteristic is obtained in advance under a condition where a rotational angular velocity is applied to a vibration gyro in a driving state. Accordingly, even if a 5 phase difference that can bring about a high sensitivity varies with the type or structure of a vibration gyro, it is possible to set such a phase difference that can bring about the high sensitivity. This consequently enables detection of the rotational angular velocity with high sensitivity and 10 increases the ratio to noise (S/N ratio).